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The REVIEW of RELIGIONS

Editor—A. Q. Niaz, B.A.

XLII, No. 10

ber, 1943

QADIAN
njab : India

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Review of Religions

Vol. XLII October 1943 No. 10

بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم

نحمده ونصلي على رسوله الكريم

ZIKR-I-HABEEB

Malfoozat-i-Ahmad

Translated from *Malfoozāt-i-Ahmad*, compiled and published by Sh. Abdul Hamid, Railway Auditor, Lahore.

June 3, 1901 (*continued*).

The topic under discussion was the fatherless birth of Jesus. The Promised Messiah said in this connection :

Our belief in regard to this matter is that Jesus had no father, and that nothing is impossible for God. Those people who hold that he had a father are in great error. The God they believe in is a lifeless God. The prayers are not accepted of people who believe that God cannot bring about the fatherless birth of a human being. In our view such men are outside the pale of Islam. The fact of the matter is that God wanted to convey a hint to the Israelites that they had deteriorated to such an extent that there was no one among them capable of becoming a Prophet or from whose seed a Prophet could be raised. Therefore the last Khalifa of the Mosaic dispensation was created without a father to make it plain to them that Prophethood was passing out of their hands. In similar manner God has established the Ahmadiyyah Movement in these days. He has created the Last Khalifa of the Mohammadan dispensation not from among the Syeds but from people of Persian origin, as a hint that this should serve as a sign and a

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warning that the condition of those who claim to occupy the seat of the Holy Prophet is far from what it should be.

Hazrat Ahmad remarked that the Prophets of God, generally speaking, did not keep individuals in view when they made their plan : they planned for the race or nation as a whole. Where the plans of a Prophet kept individuals in view rather than the race, success was not very conspicuous, as in the case of Hazrat Isa, peace be upon him.

Long ago Hazrat Maulvi Nur-ud-Din once asked the Promised Messiah to indicate some *Mujahidah* (strife) which he might undertake for spiritual benefit and training. The Promised Messiah suggested that he should write a book in refutation of Christianity, whereupon Maulvi Nur-ud-Din wrote *Faslul Khitāb-li-Maqaddmat-i Ahlil-Kitāb*, in two volumes. On another occasion when Maulvi Nur-ud-Din asked the same question a second time, he advised him to write a book in refutation of the Aryas ; and Maulvi Sahib wrote *Tasdeeq Barāheen Ahmadiyyah*. Hazrat Maulvi Nur-ud Din said that these two *Mujahidas* proved highly beneficial for him.

June 19, 1901

The name of Hafiz Mohammad Yusuf came to be mentioned, and the fact that he was taking exception to certain things. The Promised Messiah said :

He (Mohammad Yusuf) denies everything, from end to end. When the Holy Quran urges the verse (69 : 44) in support of the claims of the Holy Prophet and Hafiz Mohammad Yusuf refuses to consider this as a valid argument, there is little to be said besides. God says to the Holy Prophet : If you fabricate a lie yourself but claim to have received it from Me, if you attribute to Me words which are not My words, you shall meet with destruction. This was the argument put before the Christians by Maulvi Āl-i-Hasan and Maulvi Rahmatullah, and the Christians were unable to make any reply. I now use the same verse and the same argument in support of my claim. Hafiz Sahib and his friends refer to the Emperor Akbar, but this is quite wrong on their part. If Akbar made any such claim, some composition should be produced which he gave out to the world as having been received by him as revelations from God. They also refer to Roshan Deen Jullundharee and some others in this conection, but they fail to produce the composition that was claimed by any of these men to have been received in revelations from God. If in regard to any one, no matter whosoever, Hafiz Mohammad Yusuf and his friends could prove that he himself composed a piece but attributed to God, and that inspite of this he lived for 23 years after uttering this lie, we shall burn all our books. In their malice against me these people have gone so far that unhesitatingly they bring ridicule upon Islam and stand up in opposition to the word of God.

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They must oppose and deny me in any case, even when in doing so they have in the same breath to oppose and deny the Holy Quran as well. While opposing us they do not shrink from saying things which constitute a direct attack upon the Holy Quran. For our part, we tremble with fear on their behalf for they say such un-Islamic things while at the same time they claim to be Muslims. There were Muslims once who accepted even a weak *Hadith* if they found an element of truth in it, and they used it as an argument against the opponents; in contrast there are the Muslims of these days like these our friends who would not accept even the arguments of the Holy Quran. We invite Hafiz Mohammad Yusuf to come to Qadian with an open mind and stay here for some days. Here he should listen to us with patience and then discuss the question with us freely. We are even prepared to compensate him for any financial loss he may have to incur in thus coming to Qadian, and he may also bring Maulvi Ahmadullah Sahib with him.

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THE HOLY QURAN VIS-A VIS OTHER REVEALED BOOKS

(Muhammad Abdul Hafeez, Calcutta.)

It appears from Mr. Mujtaba's article in the July (1943) issue of the "Review" published under the heading "Has the Bible Suffered from Human Interference" that one Ghulam Geelanee, Ph. D. of Campbellpur thinks that the Holy Quran has not abrogated any of its preceding Revealed Books and that the older Books are not only operative for all times but also that their texts and meaning are as trustworthy to-day as they ever were. The Doctor has also the boldness to characterise the universally accepted belief among the Muslims of all times that the Holy Quran has abrogated all previous Revealed Books as "self-made, baseless and entirely wrong."

Mr. Mujtaba has quoted extracts from the Doctor's article "Ayeen-i-Fitrat" which appeared in the April (1943) issue of the "Nairang-i-Khayal" of Lahore and refuted the arguments contained therein by quoting appropriate verses from the Holy Quran. These verses are sufficient for those whose faith in the Holy Quran as the unalloyed word of God has not been shaken, but this may not be so for others. I should, therefore, like to supplement Mr. Mujtaba's article with a few common sense arguments.

At the outset, it may be stated that Doctor Geelanee seems to have drawn his inspiration from the Bahai source. Years ago we had occasions to hear the same view and the same arguments as those contained in the Doctor's article "Ayeen-i-Fitrat" from more than one Bahai preacher. It may also be noted that the Doctor has given the impression that the Muslim view regarding abrogation of the previous scriptures is confined to the "generality of Muslims" implying that it is not universal. This is a misstatement of fact.

Equal belief in all Revealed Books and in all Prophets of God are respectively the third and fourth "pillars" of the Islamic "Formula of Faith". The Muslim view regarding abrogation of all older Revealed Books follows from these two "pillars" as a corollary. Herein lies the "base" of the Muslims view. Nor is this view "self-made." We have got it from the Holy Quran and the Holy Prophet of Islam himself. Otherwise what need had the Holy Prophet to accept converts to Islam from Judaism or Christianity or other faiths? Or why did he invite the Roman and Persian Emperors to the faith of Islam? Why did he require the Jewish and Christian converts to follow him in all matters such as modes of prayer,

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fasting, pilgrimage, zakat, etc. ? Do we know of any Muslim in any age offering his prayers in the Jewish or Christian modes? If not and certainly not, does it not follow that the Quranic teachings and the example of the Prophet have prevailed where they have varied from the teachings of other Revealed Books or the examples of other Prophets ? This is exactly what abrogation of the older scriptures implies.

As regards the question whether the Muslim view is right or wrong, the points for consideration are whether it involves injustice to the older scriptures or to the older Prophets, or to humanity, or to God. Muslims hold that the Holy Quran is the " Latest Edition of Divine Law for Man " comprising in it all that is of value in the older Books with such additions and alterations or adaptations as are necessary for the guidance of a society international in character, spiritual in outlook and all-comprehensive in its scope. One may question the validity of this view about the Holy Quran which we are always ready to meet, but one must admit that if the Holy Quran is really so, in abrogating previous scriptures it has been guilty of none of the injustices mentioned above. For, do we not find in the Holy Quran what the older Books have still to offer ? The sole mission of a Prophet of God is to wean man from Satan and make him flow towards God. He is quite happy and satisfied if this mission continues untramelled, no matter whether by him or his followers or by a subsequent Prophet. It would be wrong to suppose that like ordinary men Prophets are also lovers of self aggrandisement. Every subsequent Prophet not only acknowledges his predecessors, but also expounds their true teachings with reference to the changes in times and circumstances, and defends them against all false charges. So there is no injustice to the older Prophets in supplementing or adapting their teachings to suit subsequent ages.

As for injustice to humanity or to God, if we recognise the fact that human society is ever progressive, Divine Law for the regulation of man's social conduct in its broadest sense must also change from age to age to meet the changed circumstances. So there is no injustice in holding that from time to time God vouchsafes to man newer and newer editions of His religious laws and abrogates the older ones to save man from the trouble of digging up the olden past for his guidance. And, moreover, religion consists in harmonising and invigorating man's feelings and intellect. This is impossible unless religious laws are expounded and re-expounded in newer and newer garbs in their manifold aspects through different personages. Do we not see how versatile and virile the immediate followers of every Prophet of God are, and how with the passage of time the descendants of these very versatile and virile followers sink into the cockpits of unreasonable conservatism and spiritual enertia ? Is it not a common experience to see old religious groups

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adhering to unreasonable dogmas simply because their religious leaders support them? Can we conceive such a sorry state of affairs to exist in the early followers of a Prophet? This aspect of the case also justifies the promulgation of New Editions of the Religious Laws.

It is not correct to suppose that the contents of the Holy Quran are identically the same as those of other Revealed Books, although they are partially similar. We are therefore unable to see the logic of the Doctor when he asks, "what wisdom is there in breaking one cup and then making another exactly like it? What meaning can there be in cancelling certain commandments and then promulgating them over again?" It is common knowledge that whenever a new edition of a book of laws or rules and regulations or price-list is published with additions and alterations or adaptations as is the case in regard to the Holy Quran vis-a-vis other Revealed Books, the authors or the publishers deem it fit for the convenience of the public to state conspicuously that the new edition cancels all previous editions. Is there anything wrong in this? Or does the Doctor deny this fact? Or does he say that in such cases the new edition does not contain any matter not to be found in the old edition it supersedes?

The Holy Quran has not yet reached all people. Nor do all people whom it has reached understand it. This is true, but this cannot be an argument against the abrogation of the older Books. A man is responsible before God for the disuse, misuse or neglect of the powers and faculties and opportunities given to him by God. It is a plain fact that God has not distributed all His gifts equally to all men. Some have got a greater share than others. Their answerability before God is correspondingly greater. Those whom the Holy Quran has not yet reached are to strive within their means. If God has not brought the Holy Book within their reach, they will not be questioned about its acceptance or non-acceptance. It may be that a non-Muslim whom the Holy Quran has not reached but who tries to keep himself pure to the best of his understanding and abilities will receive from God a greater reward than a so-called Muslim who has neglected the teachings of Islam.

Now let us examine Dr. Geelanee's view. He seems to think that all Revealed Books are simultaneously operative. It needs no arguments to show that all Revealed Books are not identical in their contents, specially in their socio-religious and ceremonial ordinances. So it follows that Dr. Geelanee either wants all peoples to give up the socio-religious and ceremonial parts of their respective religions, or he does not consider one universal brotherhood under one religion feasible and consequently advocates continuance of the water-tight divisions in human society caused by these socio-religious and ceremonial variations. A little thought will bring home to us that no religion will exist if

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these socio-religious and ceremonial variations are ignored. Because, without these, religions will lose their outward shape. A shapeless mass of ideas cannot be called religion. On the other hand, we fail to conceive how so many variations can continue against the working of the unifying forces of our time. With the invention of speedier means of communications, the far-flung corners of the globe are no more distant to-day from one another than the different parts of the same district were in the past. We now come across men of different countries professing different religions several times in a single day. The moral quality which we now have to exercise first is mutual toleration. The next thing we have to do is to compare our beliefs and observances with those of persons we come in contact. Then we form a definite idea, which may be either that all contradictions of our beliefs and observances are incorrect or that we are wrong; or that we as well as others are incorrect and should give up religion altogether. This is inevitable when men of different persuasions come into contact with each other. Take the case of a Muslim and a Christian contacting each other very closely. Now the Muslim believes that God is one, He does not beget, nor is He begotten; that Jesus was a Prophet of God; and that Jesus did not die on the Cross. On the other hand, the Christian gentleman believes Jesus to be the only begotten son of God and that Jesus did die on the Cross and thus redeemed man from the burden of the original sin which every man has inherited through Adam's fall. Can we imagine that both these gentlemen will retain their respective religious faiths intact?

As regards the Doctor's view that the text and meaning of the older Revealed Books are as trustworthy to-day as they ever were, it is curious to note that he has not cared to quote evidence from history which is most relevant, but has relied entirely on logic. It is an accepted fact of history that all Revealed Books with the solitary exception of the Holy Quran have suffered more or less from the effects of linguistic changes, frailty of human memory, inadequacy of the art of preservation of records, mighty political upheavals and overenthusiasm of religious leaders to check the progress of subsequent religious movements. This fact cannot be controverted by logic.

Dr. Geelanee asks, "If some wicked Christian or Jew had made alterations in the Injeel or the Torah, why did the other Christians or Jews allow or suffer it"? In reply we may say that alterations in these Books were not made by any wicked Christian or Jew, in the ordinary sense of this adjective, but by those Christian Fathers and Jewish Rabbis whom these communities had charged with the holy duty of preservation and propagation of their faiths. The other Christians and Jews had allowed or suffered these alterations because they did not or

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could not suspect anything wrong on the part of the guardians of their faiths. It may also be added that some Christians as well as some Jews have in fact detected alterations in the Bible and lost faith in this Book. Now to bring home to the Doctor the real position of these books, we would ask, what dialects did Jesus and Moses speak? Is there any copy of the Injeel or Torah to be found now in those dialects? Is it or is it not possible for a translator to convey a wrong sense in his translation specially when the subject-matter of the translation is outside the ken of his personal experience or the language from which translation is made is dead long since? Why out of hundreds of Gospels only four have been accepted by the Church? Is it not a fact that certain sentences found in the older editions of the Bible are not found in the later editions?

Dr. Geelanee says, " Interference with sacred texts should have some aim, some motive : for instance, love of money and greed, luxurious living, the desire to make adultery and wine permissible, etc. But in the Torah and the Injeel, there is no passage to countenance such deeds. " Those who change sacred texts certainly have motives and aims but hardly any like those instanced by Dr. Geelanee. I wonder how the Doctor's intelligence could suggest such low and degraded motives for people who change sacred texts. Such changes are not made by laymen. This is done by religious heads to whom such low motives cannot be ascribed. Motives and aims vary from man to man. Religious men always work under religious motives, service or defence of religion. We all know how religious leaders conduct discussions with their opponents and what tactics they adopt to defeat their rivals. Christian Fathers and Jewish Rabbis were not free from this common weakness of religious leaders. They changed their sacred texts to defeat their opponents or under circumstances beyond their control. Then could not feel any scruple in this matter, because, there was no guarantee that the words they changed actually proceeded from the lips of the Israelite prophets to whom they were ascribed. This process of changing the Bible is at work even to day among the Christians in the name of research, which word alone is sufficient to silence the generality of them.

This article is already long enough, but it will not be complete unless another very pertinent point is at least touched upon. Muslims believe that God spoke to the prophets just as one man speaks to another—in words as well as by signals. So do the Jews, Christians, Sanatan Hindus and many other religious denominations. The Brahmos and most philosophers interpret flights of human thoughts expressed in human composition to be words of God. The Bahais take words of Bahaullah to be the same as words of God. In view of this confusion, we are not sure as to which view Dr. Geelanee holds on this point. If he supports the Bahai view which seems to be the

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case or the philosophic view, he ought to satisfy himself first that his view on this point is correct, and then proceed to consider whether the older Revealed Books can still be relied upon as trustworthy guides. In our view, they contain words of God indistinguishably mixed up with human composition and can no longer be accepted as sufficient for our guidance.

Apart from this, they do not offer solutions for many of the present-day problems.

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SIGNIFICANCE OF THE MUSLIM 'ID-UL-FITR

By Sheikh Mubarak Ahmad, H. A., Ahmediyyah Muslim Missionary for East Africa

In every country various people celebrate various religious and social festivals which are marked by jubilation and merry-making. The Hindus every year celebrate their Devali, the Parsees observe their New Year Day, the Christians enjoy their Christmas and the Muslims celebrate two 'Id festivals annually. The first 'Id festival celebrated at the end of the month of fasting (Ramazān) is known as 'Id-ul-Fitr, while the second which follows, in about 9 weeks, is known as 'Id-ul-Azhiah.

These 'Ids are purely religious festivals and the Holy Founder of Islam (may God's choicest blessings be on him) fixed these two days under Divine order. Therefore festivals that have been appointed by God's injunctions cannot but comprise very high purposes and objects. Some people erroneously think that these festivals are meant for mental relaxation or for physical entertainment. It is true that mental work demands mental rest but it must be remembered that Islamic festivals do not mean that Muslims should be provided with temporary entertainments affording momentary joys. Islam aims at giving us mental bliss, not a short-lived and transient one but permanent and the real one. That is why Islamic festivals are known as " 'Id " which means a joy that is recurrent and there can be no doubt about the continuity and permanence of a joy that comes to us very often and repeatedly.

In order to understand the philosophy of 'Id it is necessary to know why and how man gets happy. We know that whenever a person appears to be happy there is always some sort of success that he has attained, or some of his desires have been fulfilled. That is why he is happy. A student on passing an examination leaps with joy, a research scholar feels exceedingly happy when he succeeds in discovering some truth. In the same way a business man and all the members of his family are beside themselves with joy when he gets an unexpected profit from his business. In short every one who succeeds in his aims and objects feels naturally happy. The same applies to nations. Nations are happy only when they achieve their national ends. Thus it follows that happiness is the result of a success that we achieve after a long period of constant application, hardships, and endeavour.

'Id is the name of that happiness which Muslims get on succeeding in their object. But what connection has that

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object and the means by which it is obtained with the fasts of Ramazān the close of which is marked by 'Id-ul-Fitr? The object of a true Muslim's life is wholly and solely this that he should attain nearness to his Creator and his Master, so that he should dye himself in the attributes of his true beloved. Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmed, the Promised Messiah, says with reference to achieving this end :—

> "This wealth is worth obtaining even at the cost of one's life and this ruby is worth buying even if it costs bodily annihilation."

So the achieving of this object must be the ruling passion of every Muslim. Ramazān shows us the methods and means by which we can attain this object. During the whole month of Ramazān, from dawn till sunset a Muslim who fasts practises abstinence from all those things and all those acts that are normally permissible to him. He is always endeavouring to follow strictly the commandments pertaining to the Ramazān and not to do things forbidden by God. In this month a Muslim, through self-discipline and continence, is well able to control all the low desires and he sacrifices his permissible personal inclinations simply because he is commanded to do so. Then it becomes easy for him to give up those things that are sins and are forbidden by Divine Command.

Ramazān does not only teach us implicit obedience in its strict sense but also perseverance and the bearing of hardships. While fasting a man often feels extremely hungry and thirsty, but he knows that unless he bears patiently all these he will not be able to complete his fast. After a month's perseverance he is given by God the capacity to bear even greater hardships for the sake of higher purposes. He is enabled to face all sorts of afflictions with manly vigour and thus achieve the goal.

Another practical lesson that Ramazān teaches is that the comparatively well off sections of the nation learn at first hand experience the condition and privations which the hungry and starving section have to go through daily. This experience does create a bond of sympathy between the rich and the poor to eventually bridge the gulf between them and thus create solidarity in the nation.

In short Ramazān teaches us perfect obedience, hard work and the spirit of sacrifice. Also it teaches us to help the poor and to share their troubles, and in this way brings about equality. These are the means by following which every individual and every nation can achieve success in their object. A person who observes fasts in their proper sense, and with all their implications, and thus in order to win his beloved God he is ready to give up the use of permissible things, to say nothing of keeping away from sins; who is ready to undergo every type of hardship to fulfill the spirit of Divine Commands;

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who bears hunger and thirst if need be and who, when hemmed in on all sides with afflictions and sorrows, does not lose heart but faces them with manly endurance and advances nearer and nearer towards his goal ; who smoothes down the distinctions of wealth and very resolutely follows these principles, then such a person in the end hears the melodious voice of his Creator saying " Verily I am close at hand." Not only that but he meets his Beloved never to part from Him.

As a result trumpets of joy begin to sound and the angels in heaven participate in this jubilation and the inhabitants of this earth too share this joy, and the seeker after the true beloved hears the sounds of felicitations and congratulations from all sides so loudly that the whole atmosphere is filled with their melody. This is the 'Id which is granted to a Muslim after the hardships of Ramazān.

The difficult and critical time through which the modern world is passing, when the python of Hitlerism is opening its mouth not only to swallow nations and countries but also is ready to poison those golden principles which give expression to all that is noble in man, in these conditions for every nation of the world and for every country this Ramazān and this 'Id hold up an important lesson.

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SUCCESSFUL NORTH AFRICAN CAMPAIGN

How the Visions were Fulfilled !

The African campaign is over. The Allies have gained a glorious victory. Consequently Britain and her Allies are happy. The Muslims, especially the members of the Ahmadiyya Muslim Community all over the world, are happier than others. They see in this splendid victory the hand of God Almighty and a clear sign of His existence.

Hazrat Amir-ul-Momineen Mirza Bashir-ud-Din Mahmud Ahmad, Khalifatul Masih II, the present Head of the Ahmadiyya Movement, was shown, in visions, Britain at her weakest and her regaining strength during the following six months, the unconditional surrender of King Leopold of the Belgians and the vicissitudes of the African campaign, and the ultimate defeat of the enemy.

Here are his visions concerning these historical events :

In August 1939 before the war broke out he saw, in a vision, that he was sitting in a chair facing the East. The confidential correspondence of the British Government addressed to the French Government was being placed before him. The letters came before him one after the other. A letter then came before him in which the British Government wrote to the French Government that their country was in great danger, that Germany was contemplating invasion, and was near to subjugating her. The British Government, therefore, urged the French Government to effect a union with her. When he read this letter he became very anxious, and being on the point of waking, he, all of a sudden, heard a voice saying :

" This was a matter of six months ago."

The facts shown in this vision were unimaginable. None could ever think that Britain would become so helpless that they would ask the French Government for an unprecedented union. When the time of the fulfilment drew near, God showed him, three days before it happened, King Leopold's unconditional surrender and abdication by default, in the form and figure of an abdicated king. His capitulation was a major cause of the Dunkirk disaster. Britain them became so weak that to keep France on her side urged the French Government, who was on the verge of collapse, for a union. In the terms of the union she went so far as to suggest that the two nations no longer be

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two, but one Franco-British union. Thus was literally fulfilled in June 1940 what was shown in the vision of August 1939. He then interpreted what the voice said, that six months after the date of proposed unity the misfortunes would abate. (Vide " The Sunrise " 29th June 1940, Lahore.)

The condition of Britain was desperate and precarious. Mr. Eden described the Dunkirk disaster and the following weeks as follows: " Then for the first time in our remembered history we, as a people, faced national extinction. Every horror seemed possible. We walked through fire." Six months after the declaration of proposed union the Prime Minister on 19th Dec. 1940 declared in the House of Commons: " All I can say now is that if we looked back to where we were in May and June there is not one of us who cannot go away for Christmas without a feeling of thankfulness that we have been preserved so far in our island home and that we have been able to discharge our obligations." He also said: "It is only six months since we were fighting what seemed to many of our best friends a desperate fight for bare survival."

Lord Halifax, in January 1941, disclosed to the American Press that in June 1940 after the collapse of France, England was then at her weakest and Germany might have been able to cash in if she had acted quickly. Compared with the position at Dunkirk we were now well prepared, he said.

Though Britain had gained strength, the danger of invasion was still imminent. The Amir ul Momineen on 4th April 1941, reviewing the visions in his Friday sermon declared that what had been disclosed to him showed that the Divine Forces had so far been on the side of the British. He had been shown that he had been charged with the task of defending the British Isles and that he was praying in the vision for Britain's success, which signified that the advantage of Islam and Ahmadiyyat lay in the victory of Britain. No Ahmadi, he said, could cast doubts on these visions. A series of visions had been seen by him which proved God's succour being on the side of Britain. (Vide " The Sunrise," 26th April 1941.)

This vision was fulfilled when Germany, after losing the battle of Britain in the all air, attacked Russia instead of Britain and so the whole situation was changed and the imminent danger of invasion was almost removed.

The Libyan Campaign

During the six months after the Dunkirk Disaster, the Axis forces in the Middle East reached Bardia and the British armies were confined to the boundaries of Egypt. Hazrat Amir-ul-Momineen, in September 1940, before the English Army made any advance, saw in a vision that he was in Egypt and a battle was in progress.

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"I saw that the British forces were falling back, unable to bear the pressure of the enemy. They were fighting with splendid courage, but the weight of the enemy attack was so great that they could not stand against it. Both sides charged each other with bayonets fixed, and I saw the British first holding back the enemy at the head of this flight of steps ; but they were borne down and began slowly to descend into the hall, step by step, until the enemy gained a footing in the hall itself.

"As I watched these events, the idea came to me that the British forces were weaker than the enemy, and I felt a wave of feeling surging up in me that I should go to their help. With this idea in my mind I hastily returned home where I looked for my younger brother, Mirza Bashir Ahmad. On finding him I said that it was not open to us to join the army, but as we had shot-guns and rifles with us, we could attack the enemy on our own. Accompanied by Mirza Bashir Ahmad, therefore, I hurried back to the scene of fighting. As occurs in dreams sometimes, I found that the walls of the hall did not obstruct my vision, and as I approached I could see the sanguine conflict that was going on inside. We took up positions some distance from the hall and it appears we opened fire upon the enemy. I cannot remember having seen ourselves in the actual act of firing ; but I had the sense that we had opened fire, soon after which the British began to advance. The enemy was fighting bravely for every inch of the ground, but he was steadily pushed back to the top of the flight of steps, and then flung out of the hall altogether. Then I heard a voice which said that this had happened twice or thrice before, *i.e.*, twice or thrice the enemy hadpu shed back the British and was then itself thrown back." The next day he related this vision to Sir Muhammad Zafrullah Khan, adding that it showed that the fighting on this front would roll backward and forward between the two armies; that sometimes the enemy would press back the British and drive them out of their fortified positions on the frontier, while at other times he would himself be flung violently back and be deprived in turn of much of his own territoty. The fire we had opened on the enemy, I understood to refer to our prayers on behalf of the British. The name Bashir Ahmad signified that good news was to be hoped for ; and he interpreted the vision to mean, on the whole, that in response to our prayers for a British victory it was possible that Almighty God would enable the British to press back the enemy finally and score against him in the final round.

Sir Muhammad Zafrullah related it to many of his friends, including Sir Gilbert Laith-Waite, Private Secretary to His Excellency the Viceroy. Sir Gilbert was so deeply impressed that, when he met the Amir-ul-Momineen after two or three days at tea at Sir Muhammad's house, he requested the Amir-ul-Momineen to relate the vision.

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Last year when the Axis armies reached El-Alamein and the situation became extremely precarious, the Amir-ul-Momineen in his sermon on Friday 26th June 1942, reiterated his vision with the above interpretation and so it happened. This was the third British offensive in North Africa. The fulfilment of these visions shows that in Islam there are still men who dream true dreams, see true visions to whom God speaks and accepts their prayers. We, therefore, are happier than the others, because this victory is a clear sign of the existence of the Omniscient God.

J. D. SHAMS,

Imam of the London Mosque.

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ISLAM IN DANGER—A REJOINDER*

By A. F. Khan Choudhury

This article was originally sent to the *Modern Review* on January 6, 1943, but was sent back to its author by the editor of that journal in July with a note of regret. The author has now sent it to us for publication and we do so with pleasure—*Ed.*

In the November (1941) issue of the " Modern Review " there appeared an interesting article under the above heading by Mr. Yamadatta. The learned writer said, *inter alia*, that :—

(*i*) The Hindus had great intellectual and cultural background and so they (and not the Muslims) had the greater and better claim to recognition by the Government.

(*ii*) The Indian Muslims had all along been lukewarm in the sphere of Social Service and other humanitarian and philanthropic activities and so they were a kind of upstarts.

(*iii*) There was no theological sanction behind the Personal Law of the Muslims and these Laws had been enacted with an eye to meet the requirements of the present age.

(*iv*) The Indian Muslims never made any sacrifice for the cause of independence of the country, which they regarded not as their birthplace but simply the land of adoption. All sacrifice came from the Caste-Hindus ct., ct.

The object of the present article is to examine the charges against the Muslims, and to show how far they are tenable.

Some Preliminary Observations

But before we enter into a detailed discussion of the question it would be convenient to do some preliminary spade work. Let us take a look backward as far as the quarter of the last century. With the advent of the British in India, Indian Muslims in general, and Bengalee Muslims in particular, had, as the learned author of the monumental work, " The Indian Mussalmans " observed, indeed fallen on evil days. Delineating the miserable plight of the Indian Muslims,

*With particular reference to Bengal

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Hunter wrote :—

> "The following sentences are from a petition lately presented by Orissa Muslims to theCommissioner. Their stilted phraseology may perhaps raise a smile ; but the permanent impression produced by the spectacle of the ancient conquerors of the Province begging in broken English for bare bread, is, I think, one of sorrowful silence. 'As loyal subjects of Her Most Gracious Majesty the Queen, we have, we believe, an equal claim to all appointments in the administration of the country. Truly speaking, the Orissa Muslims have been levelled down and down, with no hopes of rising again. Born of noble parentage, poor by profession, and destitute of patrons, we find ourselves in the position of a fish out of water. Such is the wretched state of the Muslims, which we bring unto your Honour's notice.....The penniless and parsimonious condition which we are reduced to, consequent on the failure of our former Government service, has thrown us into such an everlasting despondency that we would travel into the remotest corners of the earth, ascend the snowy peaks of the Himalayas, wander the forlorn regions of Siberia, could we be convinced that by so tavelling we would be blessed with a Government appointment of ten shillings a week'."

The Muslims, it will be obvious from the above quotation, did not take kindly to Western education, as they believed that their own learning and culture were superior to that of the West, as Mr. Bayley of the Indian Civil Service admitted :—

> "They (Muslims) possessed a system of education, which, however inferior to that which we have established, was yet by no means to be despised ; was capable of affording a high degree of intellectual training and polish ; was found on principles not wholly unsound, though presented in an antiquated form ; and which was infinitely superior to any other system of education then existing in India."

So their backwardness was due partly to their own misunderstanding, partly to the preconceived policy of their rulers ; and last, though not least, the ill-will and jealousy of their sister community. The sister community, the Hindus, like their prototype, the Jews, possessed to a pre-eminent degree an inherent capacity for ready adaptation to a new situation, charactersitic of a subject nation, and was quick to make capital of the opportunity. They took enthusiastically to Western learning,—thanks to religious and social reformers like Raja Ram Mohan Roy, Pandit Iswar Chandra Vidyasagar, and copied even their habits and customs, not of course omitt-

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ing their vices, became thoroughly imbued with Western ideas and influences, so that, in the words of Lord Macaulay, they became " Anglicized ", which resulted in their monopoly of the loaves and fishes which the country had to offer. Things continued in this state till the advent of reformers like Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad of Qadian, Sir Syed Ahmad of Aligarh, Nawab Abdul Latif, and Nawab Sir Salimuliah Bahadur of Dacca towards the last quarter of the 19th century, who eloquently and staunchly supported the cause of Western education, and as the result of their untiring labour and enthusiasm the Muslims took slowly to Western education, and their progress during the current century has, by no means, been trifling and negligible. Following the well-known principle " Charity begins at home," most of the educational reformers and philanthropists, confined their attention to the uplift and amelioration of the miserable plight of their own co-religionists; which, as they believed, was the stepping stone to wider and greater public service.

Muslim Contribution

We have, in the preceding few lines, sought to indicate why, to a large extent, the Muslim contribution has been limited and was confined within the body-politic of their own community. But this has not entirely been so. For example, take the contribution of Hadji Muhammad Mohsin of Hooghly, of blessed memory. Hadji Sahib, as is well-known —by a deed dedicated his entire property to social and philanthropic service and he might truly be regarded as the herald of Muslim Renaissance Movement in Bengal. He was in fact the founder of the Hooghly Mohsin College, Hooghly Charitable Hospital, Hooghly Electric Supply not excluding the premises occupied by the Daulatpur College from which the people of all creeds and communities could derive equal benefit. Again the contribution of Nawab Bahadur of Murshidabad, "the premier aristocrat in Bengal," had been by no means insignficant. People of all creeds and communities reaped the best advantage. Take again the contribution of Nawab Sir Salimullah Bahadur of Dacca. The Nawab was so bountiful in the range of his charity that Muslims and Hindus shared equally in his generosity ; and citizens of Dacca, irrespective of caste and creed, will, for ever remain beholden to him. So to say that the Muslims did not make any contribution in the building up of " Better and Unified Bengal " is nothing but travesty of truth and a bare-faced lie. True that their contributions are relatively small in proportion to the Hindus, but in consideration of their economic condition, it will certainly not compare unfavourably with the contribution of the sister community.

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Intellectual and Cultural Background

Mr. Dutta's next contention was that the Caste-Hindus had great intellectual and cultural background and so they had greater and better claim to recognition at the hands of the authorities. The statement is true only to a certain extent and degree but not wholly. As will be apparent from the above quotation the percentage of literacy among the Muslims was greater before the advent of the British in India. Besides they possessed a system of education which was, in some respects, superior to modern education. So the genesis of their present backwardness must be sought elsewhere—in their misunderstanding of the scripture, premeditated plan and policy of the rulers and apathy and intrigue of the sister community. Had the British held out a little more encouragement and bestowed their patronage on the indigenous education of the Muslims, the question of their backwardness would not have arisen.

The Meaning of the Term "Culture"

Are the Caste-Hindus really progressive and advanced in their intellectual and cultural background? Does 'Culture' mean simply a smattering knowledge of the English language, and blind imitation of Western habit and manner? If that be the criterion of culture we plead ourselves guilty of the charge. But if culture means literary attainment plus something else, we plead "Not Guilty." For example, if culture means possession of greater degree of individual and social virtues, power of discernment and discrimination, active and passive qualities of head and heart, Muslims would undoubtedly prove themselves superior to the non-Muslims in general and Caste-Hindus in particular. They have indeed a sublimer concept of the creator, higher sense of relationship between the Creator and the Created, nobler understanding of the true relationship between the different classes of created beings—in other words, they possess a superior cultural heritage to the non-Muslims. Their sins and vices are due to want and chill penury which again has its background in the apathy of the rulers. It can still be said to the credit of the Muslims that in spite of their blemishes and foibles they still acquit themselves creditably in their capacity for organization and adminstration.

Source of Muslim Law

Mr. Dutta's next contention is that there is no theological *i.e.* Divine sanction behind the Personal Law of the Muslims. We wish Mr. Dutta had been more informed. What is the

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source or sanction behind the Personal Law of the Muslims? Not the institute of this or that sage, not in the legislative enactment, but as Dr. Sir Muhammad Zafrullah Khan, ex-Law Member of the Viceroy's Executive Council, pointed out on the floor the of Central Legislative Assembly, sometime in 1938, in the direct revelation of God's Will, embodied in the Holy Quran, supported and supplemented by the Hadith and *Sunnah* of the Holy Prophet Muhammad; and thirdly in the decision of Muslim jurists and doctors of law. It is only when the Divine law is silent on any particular aspect and point (although the number of such points and aspects are almost negligible) that enactment in legislature was called forth, or enactment was sometimes necessary for confirmation and re-establishment of the law of *Sharia*. About the non-dissolution of marriage of an apostate Muslim girl the Holy Quran is explicit. Says the word of God:—

> "This day all good things are allowed to you and the food of those who have been given the book is lawful for you and your food is lawful for them; and the chaste from among the believing women and the chaste from among those who have been given the book are lawful for you) when you have given them their dowries, taking them in marriage, not fornicating nor taking them for paramours in secret" (V; 5.)

Both the letter and spirit of Muslim law allowed such alliance with the result that non-dissolution of marriage is universally approved, and such is the vogue in all Muslim countries. We wish Mr. Dutta had gained first-hand knowledge of Muslim legal literature, to be found in plenty in the English language to-day.

The Question of Communalism and Nepotism

Mr. Dutta's next contention is that due to the influx of Muslim candidates the efficiency and integrity of the public services has suffered a good deal. "Those who live in glass-houses should not throw stones at others" is a trite maxim and nowhere is it more true and appropriate than in the case of Caste-Hindus. It was this communalism, this hypocrisy, this nepotism, which led Lord Macaulay to the observation:—

> "Chicanery, perjury and forgery, are the weapons, defensive and offensive, which mark the feature of the people of South Gangetic Valley."

A look into any business, educational, or Government office, will convince an unbiased observer as to which party is guilty of this charge. It was this desire, this attempt at the monopoly of all public offices, which led to the cry of

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Separate Representation," "Separate Electorate" and 'Separate institutions." Even a cursory glance into the working of self-governing institutions, such as the Calcutta Corporation, would convince any one as to the truth of the proverb.

As regards the efficiency and competency of the caste-Hindu officers, we wish Mr. Dutta had not referred to that, for the simple reason that bitter recollections should not be raked up. Mr. A. K. Fazlul Haque, ex-Premier of Bengal, in a learned article on "Efficiency" in the "Bengal Weekly" clearly demonstrated with facts and figures, that if efficiency meant the hall-mark of academic Degrees, Muslims are undoubtedly more inefficient and incompetent than the Hindus. But if "Efficiency" means honesty and uprightness and sincerity of character and conduct, zeal and enthusiasm and capacity for doing the maximum work within the minimum time,—and that with perfect thoroughness and correctness,—Muslims would prove themselves superior to the Caste-Hindus. The present writer, who held many an administrative and executive posts of trust and responsibility under the Provincial Government, could in collaboration with his Muslim co-workers in other Departments, *inter alia*, Police, bear testimony to the fact that Hindu subordinates were past masters in the art of currying favour in various form. In which respect they are unapproachable. It is this kind of cash or kind, active or passive, inducement (the word 'bribery' is not in good taste) which inclined their bosses towards them, and proved them more "capable and efficient" than the Muslims.

The Unpatriotic Attitude

Mr. Dutta, incidentally, alludes to the unpatriotic attitude of the Muslims in not regarding Hindusthan as the land of their birth. He echoes the voice of his masters, Mr. Savarkar and Dr. Moonje, when he says that it is this unpatriotic attitude of the Muslims which earns for them the title of aliens and subject race. In season and out of season this charge has been rebutted by the Muslim press and platform but following the truth of the maxim "Constant repetition gives a semblance of reality even to a false statement," the Hindu press and public men would persist in singing this charge.

Has the charge against the Muslims had any semblance of truth? We wish Mr. Dutta had acquainted himself with the Political Philosophy of the Muslims. Muslims came to this land as conquerors, but unlike the Britishers, adopted this country as their home. They freely, (though sometimes indiscriminately) interdined and intermarried with

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the people of this soil and regarded the Caste-Hindus as their fellow compatriots, and not as aliens and subject races. They made all sorts of sacrifices for the inhabitants of the country,—in men, money and material,—made their own distinctive and individual contribution in the intellectual, social and moral domain, and did everything in their power for the amelioration and betterment of their sister communities*. If the Muslims to-day sometimes looked to their brethren in Near East for succour, inspiration and guidance, if they raised the cry of partition, like the people of Ulster, it was due to their reasonable and well-founded apprehension that left to their fate, without adequate protection and safeguard, their future would be as dark as has been that of the non-Aryans in India or the Jews in Nazi Germany.

Conclusion

To sum up we have analysed and examined the allegations of Mr. Dutta against the sister community. The indictment against them, as would appear from the foregoing observation, is largely one-sided, partial and prejudiced. It is this kind of observation which stands in the way of Hindu-Muslim understanding, and alienates one community against the other. It is this kind of unsympathetic, uncharitable and intolerable behaviour on the part of the majority community which make the Muslims feel strangers in their land of adoption.

*Compare this attitude and policy of the Muslim Rulers with their predecessing invaders, *viz.*, the Aryans, who systematically and in an organized form, persecuted the aboriginal races of India and reduced them to the state in which we now find them—the "untouchables" of India.

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FAMINE RELIEF WORK BY THE AHMADIYYA COMMUNITY OF CALCUTTA

Our brethren may have seen the article in the Daily Alfazl specially addressed by Maulana Mir Muhammad Ishaq Sahib to the Ahmadis in Calcutta on the question of relief to the distressed and destitute people in this Metropolis. It will gladden their hearts to know that the Anjuman-i-Ahmadiyya, Calcutta had already been deeply stirred by the appalling scarcity prevailing in the Province and has been thinking for some time as to what to do in order to afford some relief to those innumerable creatures of Allah who are roaming in the streets homeless, starving and with rags on, old and young, and men and women and children. Funds were therefore collected from the members of the Community in Calcutta and free feeding of 100 persons every day was started since 2nd September, 1943, the 1st day of the holy month of Ramazān. Insha-Allah, the number of persons to be fed daily will be increased to 400 persons a day if considered necessary. This is certainly no more than a drop in the ocean when one considers that thousands of such people are roaming in the streets of Calcutta crying for food from morning till midnight. Again, it is not..... merely a question of giving a meal of "Khichuri" once a day. Relief properly speaking must include feeding, clothing, housing, medical treatment and special arrangements for milk for children, and the suckling mothers, too numerous among these people. It is therefore beyond the means of any philanthropic organisation, however big and financially strong, to render all the above services to these people, not to speak of a small community like ours in this Metropolis. We can simply say that we have also joined the ranks of those philanthropic organisations which are participating in this noblest of tasks of alleviating the sufferings of distressed humanity. We shall no doubt strain our resources to do all we can. For the rest we shall ask forgiveness of our Lord Allah for what we have not the power to do and join Hazrat Mir Sahib in his prayer to the Most Merciful to condone the sins of these our helpless sisters and brethren and of us and to shelter us all under the shade of His all-pervading mercy so that we may all live to participate in the task of rebuilding of this war-worn, depopulated and devastated World! Ameen !!

D. A. K. KHADIM, SECRETARY.

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